

SB  
236  
**UNITED METHODIST CHURCH STANDS AGAINST CAPITAL PUNISHMENT**

2008 *United Methodist Book of Discipline* page 125

Paragraph 164. V. The Political Community

**G) The Death Penalty**

"We believe the death penalty denies the power of Christ to redeem, restore and transform all human beings. The United Methodist Church is deeply concerned about crime throughout the world and the value of any life taken by murder or homicide. We believe all life is sacred and created by God and therefore, we must see all human life as significant and valuable. When governments implement the death penalty (capital punishment), then the life of the convicted person is devalued and all possibility of change in that person's life ends. We believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ and that the possibility of reconciliation with Christ comes through repentance. This gift of reconciliation is offered to all individuals without exception and gives all life new dignity and sacredness. For this reason, we oppose the death penalty and urge its elimination from all criminal codes."

2008 *The Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church* Page 683 ff

Article 5035. In Opposition to Capital Punishment

"The United Methodist Church declares its opposition to the retention and use of capital punishment and urges its abolition. In spite of a common assumption to the contrary, "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," does not give justification for the imposing of the penalty of death. Jesus explicitly repudiated retaliation (Matthew 5:38-39), and the Talmud denies its literal meaning and holds that it refers to financial indemnities."

The statement continues for three pages with information from sixty years of studies that back up this stance. I would be happy to provide you with the full piece.

We also have a stand seeking a moratorium on capital punishment (5036).

Because we met in Fort Worth this year, we made a resolution particularly calling on the Texas Legislature to either abolish the death penalty or to stop executions in the state until such times as all capital cases can be tried in a completely equitable way. We called on the Texas Pardon and Parole Board and the governor to commute sentences of persons currently on death row to life in prison without the possibility of parole and we instructed the resolution to be sent to all members of the Texas Legislature and others.

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